

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 L-03 NSC-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03

SCCT-02 AID-20 PC-04 USSS-00 OPIC-12 OMB-01 DRC-01

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R 252206Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1897

INFO AMCONSUL CALI

AMCONSUL MEDELLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 2496

E O 11652 GDS

TAGS PINT, CO

SUBJ: DEATH OF GUERRILLA PRIEST DOMINGO LAIN

REF BOGOTA 1886

1. COLOMBIAN GOVT SOURCES IN ANTIOQUIA DEPT CONFIRMED ON MAR 21 THAT TROOPS OF THE IVTH BRIGADE KILLED REBEL SPANISH PRIEST DOMINGO LAIN IN NORTHEASTERN ANTIOQUIA.

2. REPORTS OF LAIN'S DEATH HAVE APPEARED ON AT LEAST FOUR PREVIOUS OCCASIONS. IN THIS INSTANCE, HOWEVER, COLOMBIAN MIL SOURCES HAVE CONFIRMED THE REPORT TO THE DEF ATTACHE. THE LONG TIME BETWEEN LAIN'S DEATH AND THE GOC ANNOUNCEMENT RESULTED FROM THE DIFFICULTY IN MAKING A POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION OF THE BODY. IDENTIFICATION WAS FINALLY ACHIEVED BY FINGERPRINTING.

3. DOMINGO LAIN WAS EXPELLED FROM COLOMBIA IN APR 69 BY THE DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE SECURITY (DAS) BUT RETURNED CLANDESTINELY TO COLOMBIA TEN MONTHS LATER TO JOIN THE SO CALLED PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY (ELN).

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4. THE LOCAL PRESS ALSO REPORTS THAT OFFICIAL SOURCES STATE THAT LAIN WAS THE LEADER OF THE ELN UNIT WHICH KIDNAPPED ANTIOQUIAN INDUSTRIALISTS CARLOS ROBERTO ANGEL AND ALVARO MARA SOTO, WHO WERE RESCUED RECENTLY.

5. ANOTHER ELN LEADER, BERTULIO SERNA URREGO (ALIAS AMICLAR) IS REPORTED TO HAVE DIED OF A SNAKE BITE.

6. COMMENT: LAIN WAS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE LAST TWO IMPORTANT LEADERS OF THE ELN FOLLOWING THE DEATHS OF MANUEL AND ANTONIO VASQUEZ CASTANO AND THE CAPTURE OF RICARDO LARA PARADA. HIS DEATH IS AN IMPORTANT VICTORY IN CONTINUING MIL EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE THE ELN. VAKY

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